Clarion Review

General

They'll Pay
David S. Wolff
CreateSpace
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Four Stars (out of Five)

Novels that capitalize on the human instinct for revenge crowd bookstore shelves, filling both classic and commercial fiction with crimes of passion and hatred. David S. Wolff develops such a theme in his first novel, *They'll Pay*.

Marly Gentry has a thriving career in pharmaceutical marketing, an exciting boyfriend, and a happy future, until the love of her life, Jake Weatherby, is killed in a terrorist attack in Tel Aviv. The day Marly's carefree world comes to an end is the day she vows revenge. Under the guise of her job, she is recruited as an assassin by the CIA. Determined to avenge Jake's death after her own injuries heal, she carries out her assignment as an undercover agent, a trained professional who could compete with James Bond. Subsequently, Marly sustains another injury in Paris, leaving her with amnesia, which, during her recovery, makes her dependent on her "recruiter," Marcello Esposito. She falls in love again.

Though the premise of his story is rather trite, Wolff entertains with his fast-paced action and gritty realism. Vivid descriptions enhance the quality of the book, as when Marly grieves for Jake: "So unfair, she had been permitted a mere sip of the elixir of life's love, for such a brief moment, then gone forever. Only digital photos of a human being she wanted and needed as a life partner. At these times, she would arise, turn on all the lights, and walk around the apartment, venting her sorrow."

Unfortunately, the author's unusual and excessive custom of capitalizing many words distracts from the story. In addition, a considerable number of awkward sentences should have been detected by an editor or proofreader. For example: "He had one failing, weakness, WOMEN, young, beautiful, preferably big-breasted women." Composed of a whopping one hundred chapters, some of which are too short, the manuscript appears to have been chopped apart arbitrarily.

Although his characters lapse into occasional stilted language, in general the author's attention-grabbing dialogue propels the story forward, making *They'll Pay* a page-turner that the average reader will not want to put down.

Julia Ann Charpentier